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NEWSLETTER

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FIRST LOANS TO LOW-INCOME RURAL FAMILIES APPROVED:

The first Economic Opportunity loans to help low-income families in rural areas raise their income and living standards were announced in mid-January by Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman.

Eleven loans totaling \$24,970 were made to families in 10 States.

Farmers Home Administration, which administers the new credit program, estimated the loans will help the 11 families increase their gross income by some \$18,920 this year and eventually by \$30,730 a year.

The loans will enable a disabled Wisconsin rural resident to expand his television repair service, a Georgia tenant family of 12 to purchase a small farm and more than double their present gross income of \$1,410, a blind veteran in New York to keep his farm, and a New Mexico family of 10 to add \$2,500 a year to their low income by cutting and selling firewood and posts.

Loans also will enable three elderly farmers in Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas to save their farms from foreclosure, a Nebraskan to expand and modernize his small-town shoe repair business, a North Carolina farmer and his sons to supplement their income by adding a commercial fishing enterprise, a New Jersey family to establish a small truck-farming enterprise, and a country woman in Georgia to reschedule her debt payments over a longer period and use the extra income from her ironing and sewing plus some other loan funds to increase her farming enterprise.

The Economic Opportunity Act authorized loans of up to \$2,500 for a maximum of 15 years at 4 1/8 percent interest to rural families to finance small family businesses or to improve their farming operations.

COMMUNITY ACTION GRANTS EXCEED \$26 MILLION

The Office of Economic Opportunity has approved 86 Community Action grants totaling \$23,068,092 to fight poverty in communities throughout the United States, and about one-third are in rural areas.

In addition, 29 technical assistance grants totaling \$3,105,452 have been given to States to help communities organize local programs.

Community Action proposals have been as varied as the conditions of poverty they are designed to correct.

Housewives Out Front In Missouri

Housewives took the lead in developing the anti-poverty plan in Ripley County, Missouri, and they came up with man-sized projects to root out the causes of poverty in the rural county.

With a \$46,350 grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity, the Ripley County Economic Opportunity Corporation, whose original task force included 12 women and eight men, will:

-- train 20 young people in home management and skills, who will then return to their communities and train 200 others.

-- train 40 students to take care of the sick and aged in a county that has no visiting nurse service.

-- set up a day nursery and pre-school program for 50 to 100 youngsters of working mothers, so that the mothers can be freed from child care to earn a living.

-- provide counseling and widen the cultural horizons of 100 youths from six to 16 whose families earn less than \$3,000 a year.

-- provide counseling for low-income families to help them identify their own problems and meet their own needs.

Staff members of the University of Missouri's Ripley County Extension Center helped the Corporation draft its Community Action proposal.

RAD Committees Sponsor West Virginia Action

RAD committees in two West Virginia counties joined forces to spearhead the local war on poverty in Hardy and Mineral counties.

With help from their county agents, the two committees drafted a proposal and received a Community Action grant of \$146,411 to help carry out a program that ranges from employment, job training, and counseling to vocational rehabilitation, health, home management, and remedial education.

With their funds, the RAD committees will start:

-- A basic education program to teach adult illiterates how to read, write and do simple arithmetic.

-- A pre-school program that includes the hiring of up to six teachers to work with children from disadvantaged families.

-- An educational summer camp for handicapped children.



-- An "urban experience" project for fifth graders. Students would make trips to nearby cities and visit cultural, educational and other sites of interest to motivate them to want to improve themselves.



Government Assistance

The Federal government provides 90 percent of the money during the first two years and 50 percent thereafter, for Community Action projects that will help the needy obtain jobs or improve their education or living conditions. The local share may be in services or cash. Most of the grants were for nine-month periods.

Approved grants are for specific projects or for technical assistance to develop anti-poverty programs.

Rural and medium-sized communities are encouraged by the Office of Economic Opportunity to unite with larger urban areas to develop Community Action Programs on a multi-county basis.

Detailed guidelines on the kinds of projects a local Community Action plan might include, and application forms, are now available from Community Action Programs, Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D. C. 20506.

EXPEDITER REALLY EXPEDITES

For three months, the Rev. George O. St. Onge tried without success to obtain \$111,000 in outside capital to revive and expand his hockey stick manufacturing plant at Richford, Vermont.

Finally he turned for help to James A. Wood, New England field representative for the Office of Rural Areas Development.

"You know," said Father St. Onge, "inside a week and a half, we had that loan."

Wood suggested that Father St. Onge and the local RAD group, the Border Town Development Association, go to the Small Business Administration, and he arranged the initial meeting.

The SBA loan, coupled with \$27,000 raised locally, allowed Father St. Onge to reactivate his firm, which had employed six men in the manufacture of unfinished hockey sticks, and to convert to manufacturing finished hockey sticks. Father St. Onge estimates by next winter, the plant will have 75 employees.

USDA-FINANCED WATER SYSTEMS SPUR ECONOMIC GROWTH FOR 8 TENNESSEE TOWNS



Six new businesses, including a \$900,000 hardware storage facility that employs 130 local people, business expansions, and 123 new homes -- that's part of the new economic activity in eight Tennessee communities surveyed by USDA.

What's behind all this activity? Well, for one thing, local citizens in these eight communities have installed public water systems with loans totaling \$1,195,000. The loans were insured by Farmers Home Administration.

The eight communities included in the survey are New Market, Tazwell, Irving College, South Morristown-Witt, Belvidere, Martel, Marlow, and West State.

In addition to the other economic activity, land values in the communities have risen. There has been a substantial increase in the use of electricity because of newly installed water heaters, laundry facilities, and kitchen appliances.

Construction of the systems provided 22,890 man-days of labor for local residents.

An estimated 4,500 people in these communities, formerly dependent on wells, cisterns, ponds and hauled-in water, now are served by the modern systems.

6,000 RAD PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 1964

Local people completed about 6,000 projects to create new jobs and improve rural living conditions in 1964, by combining their own resources with those of the Federal and State governments, Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman reports.



"These local people, working together on rural areas development committees, carried out projects that ranged from privately-financed industrial expansion and recreation development in Illinois to the marketing of gift baskets of jelly by homemakers in Arkansas," the Secretary reported.

Mr. Freeman said 109,000 private citizens have organized local rural areas development committees in 2,309 counties and have completed 9,777 projects to improve the rural economy and their standard of living since July 1, 1961.

"Federal and State agencies are providing increased assistance to these local groups to help them achieve their objectives. By working together rural people are making real progress toward the Great Society and a parity of opportunity in Rural America," he declared.

The Secretary noted that two-thirds of the RAD projects completed since mid-1961 were completed last year. He predicted there would be even greater activity in 1965 because of new tools provided in the Economic Opportunity Act to individuals, cooperatives, and communities.

WANTED -- VISTA VOLUNTEERS

Would you like to spend one year fighting poverty and ignorance, helping disadvantaged Americans get a new start in life? If you would, the Office of Economic Opportunity is looking for you as a VISTA volunteer to serve your country at home, just as Peace Corps volunteers are serving abroad. If you are a retired farmer looking for something to do, a high school graduate with a desire to help your fellow man, a housewife whose family has grown and left home, a school

teacher between jobs -- in short, no matter what your professional background -- VISTA needs you. The pay is low, but the satisfaction is great. You live and work with those you help.

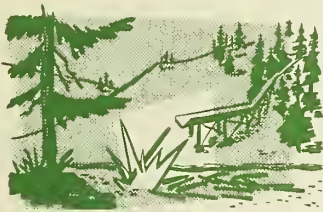
If you are 18 to 80 or older, and whether you are single or part of a husband and wife team, you can get more information or a preliminary application by writing: VISTA, Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D. C. 20506.

MONTANA VALLEY BECOMES 60-MILE LONG BELT OF ECONOMIC STABILITY

A valley of marginal farms along the Columbia River's Clark Fork in Montana has achieved solid economic advances by capitalizing on its most plentiful resource -- trees.

Montana's Clark Fork Valley began its present climb up the economic ladder in the summer of 1960 when Paul K. Harlow, chairman of the Green Mountain Soil and Water Conservation District, met George Reller and his sons, Glenn and Dale.

Harlow had been contacting sawmill operators in the area about buying locally produced trees for pulp and 2-by-4 studs, and Reller and his sons, who had sold their interest in a sawmill at Bozeman, were looking for a site for a modern all-electric sawmill.



The result was a contract between the conservation district and the Rellers in which the district agreed to supply a continuing flow of wood from the valley's 200 farms and from the adjacent National Forest. The Rellers agreed to build a mill to specialize in the uniformly small size timber resulting from what valley folks recall as "the big burn" of 1910.

The district worked out an agreement with farmers to sell their timber on a continuing basis for 20 years. The initial price of \$13 a cord is adjusted periodically to the Western Pine Association index.

The Rellers obtained loans from the Small Business Administration, the Rural Electrification Administration and a local bank to finance their \$780,000 plant.

The sawmill began operation in the summer of 1961 and since that time, farmers have received from \$12,000 to \$19,000 a month for their timber. The mill also has a monthly payroll of about \$17,000.

Federal and State agencies provided special help for farmers so they can harvest an ample supply of logs for the mill on a year after year basis. The Soil Conservation Service stepped up its conservation planning and soil survey work. The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service authorized funds for cost-share help in timber stand improvement, and Farmers Home Administration made loans for land and improvements. State and Federal foresters assisted in the harvesting program, and the local County Agent advised farmers and local leaders in the overall operation.

Bank President Glenn Larson considers the entire valley is now on a sound financial footing. Business activity has increased and farms and farm homes are being improved.

NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE URGES ARA FUNDS, MORE CONSULTANTS FOR RURAL AREAS

Recommendations made by the National Rural Areas Development Advisory Committee at its last meeting included:

- That the Area Redevelopment Administration (ARA) receive new funds to help finance industry in rural areas. The advisors noted that ARA has exhausted funds for commercial and industrial loans in rural areas, and that the ARA Act will expire June 30 unless extended.
- That Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman increase the U. S. Department of Agriculture's rural areas development staff to help rural people obtain Federal Services that often are more readily available to city people.
- That USDA "exert every effort" to get its services, and the services of other Federal agencies, to the people who are among the "lower third of the of the lower third" on the economic ladder in rural America.

GEORGIA RC&D PROJECT LATEST TO BE APPROVED

A formerly rural Georgia county will offer new outdoor recreation for the residents of Atlanta's metropolitan area under a recently authorized Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) project.

The Gwinnett County project is the latest of eight RC&D projects to be approved for special financial and technical assistance by Secretary Freeman.



Project plans call for development of watershed lakes and farm ponds for recreational use; three nature preserves to serve as public recreation areas; construction of shooting preserves, and conversion of cropland to recreation use. Soil surveys will be rushed to guide land use decisions, and industrial parks will be developed.

Gwinnett County is rapidly becoming part of the Atlanta metropolitan complex. The primary objective of the RC&D plan is to provide for wise land use changes and to develop the recreation potential. Local sponsors predict the project benefits -- excluding industrial development -- will total nearly \$5 million a year when the project is completed.

PICTORIAL REPORT TELLS RECREATION WORK OF USDA

A new pamphlet tells how USDA agencies are helping rural people develop private, income-producing rural recreation enterprises and how they are expanding public recreation facilities in the National Forests. For a free copy of "The Role of the Department of Agriculture in Accelerating Rural Outdoor Recreation on Public and Private Lands," send a postcard to: Editor, RAD Newsletter, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250.

62 JOB CORPS CONSERVATION CENTERS ANNOUNCED TO DATE

About 10,000 young people will learn new job skills and further their education in the 62 Job Corps Conservation Centers, announced so far.

Thirty-six centers in 22 States, accommodating about 5,000 young men, will be in the National Forests and administered by USDA's Forest Service. The other centers will be operated by the Department of the Interior.

The first Job Corps Conservation Center to get into operation was the Catoctin Center near Frederick, Maryland. Another center was scheduled to open in Ouachita National Forest near Hot Springs, Arkansas, in early February.



You can help by telling deserving young men about the opportunities for them in the Job Corps. You can get more information to pass along to these young people at every county office of the Farmers Home Administration, the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service or the County Extension Service. Local offices of the Forest Service also have Job Corps information.

RAD PROJECT JELLS

Homemakers around Batesville, Arkansas, are marketing gift baskets of jelly -- an idea from the Independence County Development Council. This is the latest RAD project in a multi-county area that has pioneered in farm vacations, a folk festival, handicraft guild, and a springtime "Dogwood Drive" -- in addition to industrial and agricultural development.

R---- A-- D-----?

They have come up with a new set of words for the initials R. A. D. in Springview, Missouri -- "Ready and Determined." But the results are the same.

Local accomplishments include a new post and lumber company, a new bank, store, cafe, high school building, church, senior citizens home, and a modern sewerage system.



PEOPLE ADOPT A "CAN DO" ATTITUDE, AND A TOWN BEGINS TO MOVE

When a former Governor urged North Carolina towns to survey their industrial potential, the people of Newland (Avery County) took stock and found their assets were rather limited.

But the survey was not a total loss. Out of it grew the realization of just how serious the lack of employment opportunities and the outmigration of young people had become in the mountain community.

A planning board was organized, and in 1962 it worked out a development plan that emphasized recreation, tourism, agriculture, and service-type industries.

Since then, per capita income has greatly increased, more than doubling what it was 12 years ago. Before 1965 is half gone, 500 new jobs are expected to open, adding a \$1.5 million payroll in a county of barely 12,000 persons.

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"But most significant is the change in the attitude of our people," says Ray Braswell, former president of the Chamber of Commerce. "The feeling that they can do something for themselves has become infectious."

The major progress so far has been the development of Mountain Glen, a recreation complex which will include summer cottages, a motel, restaurant and other facilities constructed around an 18-hole championship golf course.

"We opened nine holes of the golf course in 1964 and will open all 18 holes in the summer of 1965." Braswell said.

Local people raised \$400,000 through the sale of lots and stock to start work on Mountain Glen. Later authority was obtained for a \$390,000 ARA loan to complete the project.

Community leaders say the spirit of cooperation generated by development of the Mountain Glen project let to the other progress that has been made.

One of the Nation's largest knitting mills will open a plant in the county in the spring. It will provide employment for over 200 people. Again local citizens took the initiative, raising half of the needed \$300,000 to acquire the land and build the factory. The firm loaned the balance, interest free.

"I'm quite sure we would not be getting this new plant had it not been for Mountain Glen," says Braswell.

Two other small industries are in the process of expanding. A motel and restaurant have been built in Newland, and the owner says he decided to build because of the faith the people exhibited in developing Mountain Glen.

Agricultural progress is being made, despite the limitations of small farms too steep for mechanization. The County extension chairman has been urging farmers to expand production of apples, cabbage, flowers, Christmas trees and nursery stock.

"We are making progress -- progress that you can measure," says Braswell.

And it was a "can do" attitude that made it possible.